



# Hershel W. Gober

## Director

Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs  
Dec., 1987 - Apr., 1993

Mr. Hershel Gober was born December 21, 1936 in Monticello, Arkansas where he grew up and graduated from public schools. He later received a B.A. in History from Alaska Methodist University in Anchorage (now Alaska Pacific University), from which he graduated cum laude.

Hershel entered the U.S. Marine Corps in 1956 and served in the enlisted ranks for three years. He then joined the U.S. Army Reserve and in 1961, entered active duty with the Army. He retired in 1978 with the rank of Major.

His military time included two tours of duty in Vietnam. The first as an Infantry Advisor to the South Vietnamese Army, from 1965 to 1966; and the second as an Infantry Company Commander in 1969. His decorations include the Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Parachutist Badge and other meritorious service, commendation and Vietnam service medals. In 1970 he was named to the select list of Outstanding Young Men of America and in 1993, he was honored by the Infantry Officers' Candidate School (OCS) at Fort Benning, Georgia, with his induction into the OCS Hall of Fame.

Following retirement, Hershel work with the North West Alaska Pipeline Company. First in Government Affairs and then as Director, Rights of Way and Land Acquisition. Returning to Arkansas, he served two years as Senior Instructor, Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps, at Warren High School. In 1985, he assumed duties as the Department Adjutant of the American Legion, Department of Arkansas. He held this position, and as Director, Child Welfare, until January 1, 1988. He was then appointed Director of the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs by Governor Bill Clinton .

In 1993, Mr. Gober was nominated by President Bill Clinton and served as Veterans Affairs Deputy Secretary. He was one of President Clinton's first appointments. In addition to his regular duties, Mr. Gober also led Presidential missions to Vietnam seeking resolution of POW and MIA issues. In 2000, Clinton tapped him to become Secretary, and Gober served in that capacity for the last months of the Clinton presidency.

Mr. Gober has served as a member of numerous veterans organizations including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart and Marine Corps League.